

# Connecticut Heating & Cooling Contractors Association

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MEMBERS OF: CBIA – NFPA – ICC

Established 1972



## TESTIMONY OF JENNIFER JENNINGS EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR BEFORE THE VETERANS' AFFAIRS COMMITTEE FEBRUARY 19, 2013

2013

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Andrew Markowski  
Statehouse Associates, LLC.

The Connecticut Heating & Cooling Contractors Association (CHCC) submits the following comments *in support of HB-5387 An Act Establishing A Task Force To Study Military Occupational Specialty Training As A Substitute For State Licensing Requirements*:

Members of the heating and cooling industry applaud all current members of the military and veterans alike for their service to our country, and the CHCC stands as a willing partner to help promote careers in the occupational trades for members of the military and veterans. It is important to streamline the process by which we get our veterans reemployed, particularly in our field, where heating & cooling technicians are very much in demand.

With regard to the relevancy of the training received, it is our understanding that for the purposes of occupational trades licensed by the Department of Consumer Protection, the various occupational licensing boards are already required pursuant to Public Act 10-105 to accept relevant military training in considering whether an individual is eligible to obtain a license. This is reviewed on a case-by-case basis; however, the CHCC also understands that sometimes this process can be slow, unwieldy, and sometimes inconsistent.

Far too many contractors do not maintain the proper licenses or qualifications, creating public safety concerns. In addition, individuals who have worked as apprentices but whose employers failed to properly register them, are unable to pursue licensing without repeating their apprenticeship hours. These laws must be vigorously enforced to protect consumers and employees. Strong enforcement of the state's licensing and apprenticeship laws relative to the heating and cooling industry along with all licensed trades is paramount. Ensuring that individuals performing work are held to high standards helps maintain the highest possible level of safety, training and professionalism for our industry, just as it does in the military. In this respect, CHCC supports efforts to have veterans employed or re-employed in our growing industry in a fair and timely manner.

On behalf of the CHCC, a sincere thank you to all veterans and current service members for their service, and thank you to this Committee for its consideration of our comments and as we look forward to passage of this bill and more support for those who serve and have served our great Nation. Furthermore, the CHCC is willing to offer and recommend someone from our association to serve on the task force to discuss our experience with employing and training veterans in the heating & cooling industry.

On a personal note, as a proud big sister of a recently discharged U.S Marine, whom received a Purple Heart following his second tour to Afghanistan, I cannot express enough gratitude to those who support the legislation and efforts to provide opportunities for our service members and Veterans. It is now our opportunity to serve those who have served us.